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Jordan M. Meschkow
Meschkow & Gresham, PLC
Suite 409
5727 North 7th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85014

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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of
Shepherd, et al.
Application No.: 10/729,809
Filed: December 5, 2003
Attorney Docket No: 8029-A-1

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: ON PETITION
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This is in response to the petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) filed February 25, 2008.

The petition is **DISMISSED**.

Any request for reconsideration of this decision must be submitted within **TWO (2) MONTHS** from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition" under 37 CFR 1.137(b)."

This application became abandoned for failure to respond in a timely manner to the non-final Office action mailed September 13, 2005. The notice set a shortened statutory period for reply of three-months from its mailing date. Extensions of time were available pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a). A response was not received within the allowable period and the application became abandoned on December 14, 2005. A Notice of Abandonment was mailed on March 17, 2006.

Effective December 1, 1997, the provisions of 37 CFR 1.137(b) now provide that where the delay in reply was unintentional, a petition may be filed to revive an abandoned application or a lapsed patent pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b). A grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) must be accompanied by:

(1) the required reply, unless previously filed. In a non-provisional application abandoned for failure to prosecute, the required reply may be met by the filing of a continuing application. In an application or patent, abandoned or lapsed for failure to pay the issue fee, or any portion thereof, the required reply must be the payment of the issue fee or any outstanding balance thereof.

(2) the petition fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(m);

(3) a statement that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional; and

- (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(c).

The instant petition does not satisfy the requirements of item (3) above.

As to Item (3), the *Manual of Patent Examining Procedure*, Section 7711.03(c) provides, in pertinent part, that:

The Office does not generally question whether there has been an intentional or otherwise impermissible delay in filing an initial petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b), when such petition is filed: (A) within 3 months of the date the applicant is first notified that the application is abandoned; **and** (2) within 1 year of the date of abandonment of the application. Thus, an applicant seeking revival of an abandoned application is advised to file a petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137 within 3 months of the first notification that the application is abandoned to avoid the question of intentional delay being raised by the Office (or by third parties seeking to challenge any patent issuing from the application).

Where a petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b) is not filed within 3 months of the date the applicant is first notified that the application is abandoned, the Office may consider there to be a question as to whether the delay was unavoidable or unintentional. In such instances,

(A) the Office will require a showing as to how the delay between the date the applicant was first notified that the application was abandoned and the date a 37 CFR 1.137(a) petition was filed was "unavoidable"; or

(B) the Office may require further information as to the cause of the delay between the date the applicant was first notified that the application was abandoned and the date a 37 CFR 1.137(b) petition was filed, and how such delay was "unintentional."

To avoid delay in the consideration of the merits of a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b) in instances in which such petition was not filed within 3 months of the date the applicant was first notified that the application was abandoned, applicants should include a showing as to how the delay between the date the applicant was first notified by the Office that the application was abandoned and the filing of a petition under 37 CFR 1.137 was (A) "unavoidable" in a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a); or (B) "unintentional" in a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b).

It appears that petitioner should have been aware that the application was abandoned on, or about March 17, 2006, yet the instant petition was not filed until almost two years later. Petitioner did explain the delay in filing the instant petition and how the delay was unintentional.

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Accordingly, the renewed petition must be accompanied by an explanation for said delay including, but not limited to, the considerations provided in MPEP § 711.03(c) cited above.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail:

Mail Stop Petitions
Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By facsimile:

(571) 273-8300
Attn: Office of Petitions

Telephone inquiries concerning this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3222.



Kenya A. McLaughlin
Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions